

Seeing Our Bardos All the Time

Part 2

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Look at the television—everything it shows is a bardo. Each and every moment is a bardo. “Bardo” doesn’t just mean the unbreakable, unshakable nature of the bardo of dharmata. Or maybe you think it just means when you are dead? No. Every second we are breathing—that’s a bardo. Each second from our birth as we grow up, that’s a bardo. Fresh bardo, mature bardo, then dried up, skinny old bardo. Then death bardo; then again you don’t know what’s happening. Then again conceived in somebody’s womb; you don’t know what kind—human or animal or bug—you could become any kind of being.

People make a big deal of the bardo of death and the bardo of dharmata, but every instant is actually a bardo. Every instant is another “between.” You can start to recognize your bardo anytime. Every time. Every instant. Then when you are dying, for you that is just another bardo. Each second you are not dead, that’s a bardo. Each second you are dying, that’s a bardo. Each second you are dead, that’s a bardo. Recognize, recognize, recognize.

What are you thinking? What kind of bardo do you have right now? Your experience means your bardo! When you go to the bathroom, that’s a bardo, too. Everything!

Bardo is your mind. Is it something else? No. Wherever you go, bardo. Wherever you stay, bardo. Whatever you are eating, bardo. Sleeping, bardo. Shitting, bardo. Farting, bardo, too—but we don’t talk about that because of the smell. Smell bardo. Yuck!

“Bardo” means “nothing!” Just “between!” From today to tomorrow—between there, for example. Each second to the next, between them—bardo.

Therefore, we need to recognize more and more that each second is our bardo. What do we have to do? Not any kind of big deal. Just practice. Practice Vajrasattva, for instance. As you say OM BENZAR SATTO HUNG, OM BENZAR SATTO HUNG, each second is your Vajrasattva bardo. Do the visualization of Vajrasattva’s body—each second is that Vajrasattva body bardo. Vajrasattva’s body bardo, Vajrasattva’s speech bardo, Vajrasattva’s phenomena bardo, mind bardo. Everything is bardo. Everything is between. When you came here, that time you spent coming was a bardo. From then until now, how long you have stayed here listening to me, that’s a bardo.

If something is a bardo, it means it is not a big deal! When you say it is “bardo,” you are saying it is between—just something between there. That’s not a big deal!

We say “recognize our bardo.” Does that mean we need to do something special? Make something fancy? No. Just recognize, “Oh, this is our phenomena.” Practice. See your phenomena. You can mix your phenomena with practice phenomena. That’s again bardo! Your

visualization of Guru Rinpoche, Chenrezig, Vajrasattva, or any deity — that's bardo, bardo, bardo each second, too. Peaceful bardo, wrathful bardo, this bardo, that bardo.

Look, on my wall I have a wonderful picture of His Holiness the Sixteenth Karmapa. I look at him — Karmapa bardo [*he places his palms together for a moment, looking up at the Karmapa.*]

Therefore, each second we practice, that moment is a bardo. If we practice and understand it's Vajrasattva, and maybe we are pretending at some visualization, that's still our own funky bardo. Then we say the mantra, and maybe we close our eyes, so it's a blind bardo.

Everybody talks about dzogchen, but dzogchen has no beginning and no end. To think of dzogchen as your lama or your buddha or your yidam, that's very good. But to think of it as your boyfriend or girlfriend, that's delusion. Not dzogchen. Not Great Perfection or small one, either. Just stupid habit. Right now, we are alive, we have the chance for much more than that deluded stuff.

So please, watch carefully. Watch your own phenomena, your own experience. Piece by piece, very simple. Very stupidly, almost, you can watch each thing. You don't need something fancy. You think dzogchen is fancy? Good luck! If you see all phenomena as bardo, dzogchen bardo is there. Not something else. Not some other place. We love to blah, blah, blah and make everything complicated. We like things to be official! What are you going to get that's official? Everything is just your bardo. You can call it "official bardo," but that doesn't work because "bardo" means you are losing it each second. Then you lost your "official" or "efficient" or whatever! Forget it! You are not qualified for that kind of stuff.

What are we qualified for? Just bardo. We are bardo sentient beings. Oho! Maybe you don't like that because it sounds low. "Bardo" is just "between," just nothing. Something you put in a corner. Maybe you think you are better than that. Actually, if you go into that low one, that bardo, everything is there. Then you become bardo buddha. That way we can be qualified. Just try that way.

Tashi Delek!

-Gyatral